for business in Nepal. The Government of India also believes that the resolution of the political and security problems in Nepal created by the Maoist insurgency will contribute to improving the business climate in Nepal.

Inclination of US Intelligence Agencies toward Pakistan's ISI

122. SHRI TARIQANWAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that US intelligence agencies are leaning on Pakistan's ISI to carry out anti-India activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the number of militant groups are operating in Bangladesh and Pakistan to carry out terrorist activities in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E AHAMMED): (a) and (b) US Government has conveyed that they are against cross border terrorism and that they will continue to press Pakistan in this regard. This has been reiterated at high levels in the US Government.

(c) As per available information, many terrorist organizations and infrastructure of support to terrorism, including training camps, launching pads, communication centres, etc continue to exist in Pakistan and the territory under its control.

Frequent reports are received by our agencies that Indian insurgent groups have been using Bangladesh territory for sanctuary, training camps, transportation of arms, transit, etc.

India's Dismay on Anti-India Militant Groups in Nepal

123.SHRI TARIQANWAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of Nepal has visited India, recently;

(b) whether India had conveyed its dismay on anti-India militant groups operating in Nepal;

(c) if so, the reaction of Nepalese Government thereto; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (d) His Excellency Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister of Nepal, visited India from September 8-12,2004, at the invitation of Prime Minister of India. All issues of common concern and interest including those relating to prevention of crime and terrorism were discussed during the visit.

The Government is concerned about anti-India militant groups misusing the Nepalese territory and the open India-Nepal border for activities inimical to India's interest and is seized of the matter. We have taken up this issue with His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMGN) regularly including during the recent visit of Nepalese PM Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba. HMGN has assured that it will not allow its territory to be misused for activities inimical to India's interest.

There is close cooperation between Nepal and India with regard to combating crime and terrorism. Measures have been taken to enhance co-operation with Nepal, including in the field of information exchange and effective border management. A bilateral institutional mechanism has also been evolved which includes a Joint Working Group on Border Management, Home Secretary Level Talks and Bilateral Consultative Group on Security issues to jointly address issues relating to maintenance of peace and security and prevention of criminal acivities in the India-, Nepal border areas. Regular dialogue of Customs officials also takes place under the Agreement for Cooperation to control Unauthorised Trade. The Special Service Bureau has been deployed along the border with Nepal to strengthen security in the border areas.

Efforts are also being made to further strengthen the institutional legal arrangements between India and Nepal for effectively combating crime and terrorism. The two governments are in the process of finalising an Agreement on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and an updated Extradition Treaty.